(c) The following remedial measures have been taken by the Government to stabilize prices of cotton:—

(i) The cotton Corporation of India (CCI), a central nodal agency, has procured kapas equivalent to 7,58,904 bales of 170 kgs. each in various States, the share of Gujarat being 2,08,199 bales as on 8.3.2002 Purchases are still in progress.

(ii) Import duty on raw cotton has been increased from 5% to 10% since 9th January, 2002 to restrain imports.

(iii) Raw cotton has been placed under Open General Licence (OGL) to help Indian farmers to earn higher prices in the international market for their produce.

(iv) The Government has also launched Technology Mission on Cotton with four Mini Missions with total fund allocation of Rs. 593 crores with the objectives of increasing cotton production and productivity.

Transfer of Central Farm at Aralem to Kerala

2083. SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Kerala Government has requested to transfer the Central State Farm at Aralem to Kerala;

(b) whether Government have taken a decision in the matter; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) No decision has been taken by the Government in the matter.

MSP for red gram in Karnataka

2084. SHRI H.K. JAVARE GOWDA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the red gram growing farmers in Karnataka are incurring losses, due to market fluctuations, low yield and menace of pest;

(b) if so, whether Government would enhance the Minimum Support Price from Rs. 1320/- to Rs. 2000/-; and